

REMARKS (37 CFR 1.111)

Applicant has considered all points made by the Examiner in the Office Action and has incorporated Examiner's suggestions to ensure compliance with the applicable rules.

The examiner has rejected Claims 1, 2, 5, and 9 pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 102(b) and rejected Claims 3 and 4 pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 103(a), and such claims have been canceled. Applicant has canceled the above claims without prejudice to refiling the claims at a later date and without any admission that the claims are not patentable. The cancellation reduces the subject matter before the Examiner and, hopefully, expedites the process of reaching agreement on the language for the remaining claims.

Claim Objections

The Examiner has objected to Claims 6-8 and 10-33 as depending from a rejected base claim. The Examiner has further indicated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim(s). Applicant has amended them pursuant to the Examiner's comments. It is respectfully submitted that Claims 6-8 and 10-33 are now in a condition for allowance.

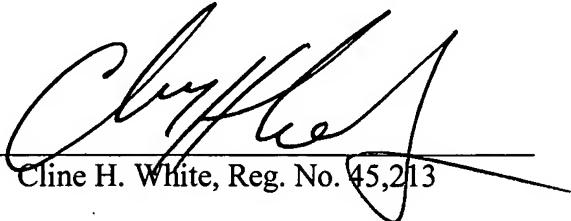
CONCLUSION

In view of the above, it is submitted that the remaining claims are in a condition for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections and objections are hereby requested. Allowance of the pending claims at an early date is solicited.

If impediments to allowance of the pending claims remain, and a telephone conference between the undersigned and the examiner would help remove such impediments in the opinion of the examiner, a telephone conference is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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